

31 JUL 1948

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1. Soviet reaction to request for interview with Stalin--US Ambassador Smith reports that he has communicated to Molotov's deputy, Zorin, the request for an interview between Molotov and Stalin, on the one hand, and the US and French Ambassadors and the UK Charge, on the other, "in order to discuss the present situation in Berlin and its wider implications." (The French Ambassador and UK Charge were scheduled to take similar action.) Zorin received Smith's remarks and aide memoire in uncompromising fashion. Zorin replied that (a) Molotov's absence on vacation for the time being prevented granting the requested interview; and (b) the aide memoire indicated no change "in the position of the US or of any subjects which would make profitable a conversation with Generalissimo, Stalin and Mr. Molotov."

Smith declared that he had refrained from requesting interviews with Stalin in the past "except on a matter of first importance" and that he "considered the present situation the gravest which had arisen" since he came to Moscow two years and a half ago. Zorin replied that the position of the Soviet Government had been clearly defined in its 14 July note but said that he would transmit the US request to his Government for consideration.

2. US views on Greek use of Dodecanese airfields--The Department of State has transmitted to US Embassy Athens its opinion that use of the Dodecanese airfields by the Greeks against the guerrillas would probably elicit a Soviet protest and should therefore be avoided if not dictated by absolute military necessity. The Department recognizes that the Italian Peace Treaty which ceded the Dodecanese to Greece also prohibits their militarization. However, the Department feels that inasmuch as the Treaty allows defeated Italy to use temporary military installations to meet "requirements of an internal character," the Greeks have an equal right to use Dodecanese installations to maintain internal order.

State Department review completed

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